

Pam
No. Am.

Home missions

N.C.C.C. USA - Div of Home Mis

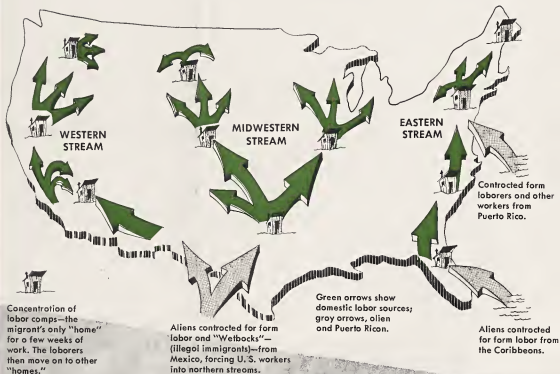
Migrant Millions



Our Agricultural Migrants . . .

"The stranger that sojourneth with you
shall be unto you as the home-born among
you, and thou shalt love him as thyself;
for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt. . ."

LEVITICUS 19:34



THE MAJOR STREAMS OF MIGRATORY LABORERS

Strangers and Sojourners...

Two million strong, the harvest caravans move northward each spring, picking and packing the ripening fruits and vegetables that appear on our dining tables. In old jalopies, in trailers, in jolting crew bosses' trucks, their babies and children and their few possessions with them, they fan out over the three main migrant routes, stopping to garner one crop. Then, their services no longer wanted, they move on, anxiously hoping to pick another, following the seasons as they go. Harvest over, they return south to the winter crops.

They are citizen families, the majority of Spanish, Negro, and American ancestry with an increasing number of Indian Americans. Imported labor includes men from the British West Indies and Mexico. Last of all, a half million to a million are "wetbacks," who have illegally crossed the border to a furtive life of uncertainty and insecurity.



The Pattern of Harsh Uncertainty....

Though many things have been done by public and private groups to better the lot of a small percentage of our migrants, to the great mass, life is hazardous. With some exceptions, this is the picture



- Paid only when they work, idle during days or weeks of rain or illness, they are not covered by unemployment insurance, collective bargaining, minimum wage laws, or social security. Recent studies show annual earnings are between \$500 and \$600 for a single adult male, around \$1,000 for a family whose children labor, too.
- Poor housing is their lot, without comfort, privacy or sanitation. It ranges from one-room accommodations in long barracks to sheds, barns or the great outdoors with a piece of burlap for protection.
- Often deprived of medical care and welfare services because of residence requirements, their illness and death rates are higher than those of any other groups. Workmen's compensation rarely applies to them.
- Sixty percent are illiterate and their children, cut off from regular schooling, are swelling the number.
- Homeless transients, these citizens have no vote, hence no voice in the legislature.
- Neglected, even rejected by many communities, they suffer greatly from loneliness. They don't belong—anywhere. Without roots, their children have small chance of developing normal lives.

*No One
Planned it
This Way*



There is little use in trying to assess blame for this blight in the American occupational structure.

It began with the laying of the transcontinental railroad in 1887. This opened the middle west and the east to the lush crops the west started producing on vastly increased acreages. Not enough local help could be found, so seasonal workers were brought in at harvest times.

It will continue as long as the production of our fruits and vegetables is dependent on their hands. We can help today's low income farm families acquire better soil techniques to prevent their being forced into the migrant stream; we can try to insure new skills and new jobs to those who have been so forced, so that they can settle into year-round work and permanent homes. Tomorrow's situation, however, is still to be solved by all of our citizens.



Brotherhood in Action . . .

The churches were concerned about the plight of migrants and about community attitudes toward them even before migrancy became a national problem. The Migrant Ministry began in 1920 with an effort to meet the spiritual and human needs of Polish and Italian migrants laboring on Maryland and New Jersey farms. In the years since, it has expanded, despite limited budgets,

into 25 states and now reaches 10 to 20 percent of the estimated 2,000,000 migrants.

However unfinished our job is, the churches' Migrant Ministry is a challenge to every community where these rootless travelers labor. Working across denominational lines, it has brought many things to migrants. We see what can be done.



Does Your Community Measure up?

WORSHIP—

Church services, Sunday schools and religious classes, so that a man no longer has to say: "I don't know but one thing. I wake up, go to the fields, come back, go to bed." The modern version of the circuit-riding minister of pioneer days brings spiritual comfort and a sense of community to people isolated socially, if not geographically.

SPECIALIZED EDUCATION—

Adult literacy classes; summer school for older children who fall far behind their age group; sewing, cooking and handicraft classes. As an experiment, two teachers cared for 21 children, 6 to 9 years old, in a pleasant room of a local church. School equipment was provided by the churches and the Rotary Club. The grower supplied bus service. Result: The State Education Department wants now to take over and expand the idea. In another community the American Association of University Women cooperates with the Migrant Ministry in a school attended by 250 children for a month each summer.



HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES—

Child care centers for pre-school children, so that mothers need no longer leave their babies in boxes between the rows, lock them in jalopies, or leave them to the uncertain attention of older children.

Enlistment of the aid of health authorities for first-aid, tuberculosis, venereal disease, dental and visiting nurse services, family and personal counseling. This provides people on the move with many services that settled community living usually insures.



RECREATION—

For children, teen-agers, adults: Sports, story hours, singing, painting, movies, parties, community nights. In addition, some growers are installing swings and jungle gyms for the children and are helping provide diversion for old and young. One drives his workers to a local movie every week, promotes parties and games. He knows that days filled with hard labor and barren leisure-time lead to all kinds of trouble. He wants his work efficiently done, his crops in on schedule.

THE HARVESTER—

Station wagons or "Harvesters," driven by Migrant Ministry staff members, carry a mobile program to isolated groups of migrants. Each Harvester is equipped with a portable organ, an altar, books, a record player, games, and materials for sports, movies and crafts.

OBJECTIVES—

Whatever the concrete program, the aim is to help each individual gain a sense of achievement and personal worth.



Good Housing Means Good Workers

Astute growers and processors, seeking to avoid large labor turnover, are competing for the better workers by setting up better housing—simple, but clean and decent, with regard to privacy; with electricity, adequate cooking, laundry and sanitary facilities, and good drinking water. Some growers provide managers to keep the camps in order.

From many states comes the testimony of growers that good housing is good business. State migrant labor bureaus, county health departments, county agents, the federal Farm Placement Service and other agencies assist individual growers, granges, farmers' associations, and co-operatives with practical housing plans of various styles.

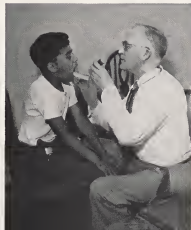




Many help in the Migrant Ministry

All who recognize their responsibility toward others—church members, ministers, community leaders, Parent-Teacher associations, growers and processors—are part of the Migrant Ministry. Cooperating are individual members of Grange and Farm Bureaus; service clubs like the Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary; representatives of city, county, state and federal departments of welfare, education and health.

Mission boards, councils of churches and of church women, and sometimes ministerial associations, form migrant committees, working with public and private agencies all along the line. Often a Migrant Ministry pilot project is taken over and run by the state. Some governors have set up interdepartmental bureaus or commissions of migrant labor.



National Migrant Committee

Three times a year the National Migrant Committee meets to frame policies. Its 110 members are named by denominational mission boards, state migrant committees and the Division of Home Missions. All migrant committees—local, area, state and national—are members of a team enjoying a co-operative relationship with the National Council of Churches' Home Missions Division.



Division of Home Missions

Made up of representatives of denominational boards, this Division helps state migrant committees survey the field and decide where staff is needed. The Division recruits and trains staff, supervises migrant programs and relates the work of state migrant committees to those of other states. It channels appropriations of constituent denominations to field program and enlists the cooperation and resources of other units of the National Council of Churches. It seeks particularly the confidence and cooperation of migratory labor employers. At the same time it provides publicity to alert communities to migrant needs, seeking to lessen prejudices and open doors of local schools, health centers and churches to the migrants in their midst.

Responsibility for migrant work was delegated in 1921 by the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions to the latter body. Now the churches channel their migrant work through the Division of Home Missions, successor to those agencies.



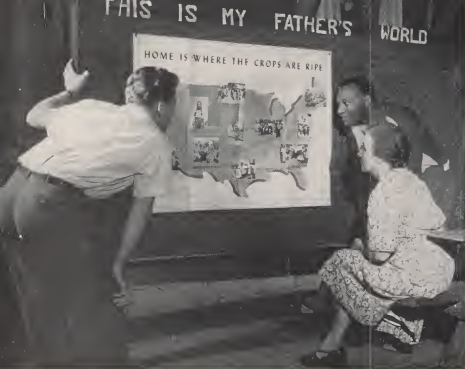
Migrant Ministry Staff

From New York headquarters, the national director, aided by part-time consultants, guides the Migrant Ministry. In the field are 25 year-round persons, 250 summer staff and local volunteers. Regional supervisors are based in Los Angeles and Chicago. There are several area and state supervisors, some working with State Councils of Churches. *Year-round* staff plans and coordinates program, develops experimental projects, trains and supervises seasonal staff, and cooperates with committees. *Seasonal* staff directs program in migrant camps.

Migrant Ministry Support

The continued growth of the Migrant Ministry is due to the vision and leadership of church women. About half of the support comes through 25 state migrant committees, obtained from many sources, including employers of migrant labor, and a small portion from the migrant people themselves. In general, this provides for the *seasonal* field staff, their travel and program equipment. The other half comes through the Division of Home Missions from a share of the World Day of Prayer offerings, appropriations from home mission boards and gifts from other sources. This half provides the *year-round*, trained staff, their travel and equipment, headquarters expenses, two field offices and many Harvesters.





Denominational Groups Participating

African Methodist Episcopal
 African Methodist Episcopal Zion
 American Baptist Convention
 Augustana Lutheran
 Church of the Brethren
 Congregational Christian
 Disciples of Christ
 Evangelical and Reformed
 Evangelical Congregational
 Evangelical United Brethren
 Friends Five Years Meeting
 Mennonite

Methodist
 Presbyterian, U. S.
 Presbyterian, U. S. A.
 Protestant Episcopal
 Reformed in America
 United Lutheran in America
 United Presbyterian
 Church of God
 Cumberland Presbyterian

American Bible Society

YOU CAN HELP

1. Get in touch with the local migrant committee to find out the needs.
2. If no migrant committee exists in your area, write for guidance to the nearest regional office of the Division of Home Missions or to your State Council of Churches. Use their study materials, film strips and records in any group to which you belong.
3. Urge school and health services for migrant children and literacy classes for their parents.
4. Strive in every way to make the migrants welcome in your community and church.
5. Exercise your responsibility as a religiously motivated citizen to support legislation and agencies working in behalf of migrants.





THE PURPOSE

In the Migrant Ministry the churches are united to serve men, women and children who are following the crops. This program is centered in the Christian faith and seeks to share that faith with the migrant, and to develop in him a sense of his personal worth, belonging and responsibility. It seeks to awaken the community to the opportunity and obligation of sharing equally all the protective benefits and warmth of community life. It challenges the local churches to include these seasonal neighbors in their concern and full fellowship. It calls on the state and nation to apply Christian principles to the economy in which migrants live and work.

Purpose officially adopted December, 1953, by the National Migrant Committee

DIVISION OF HOME MISSIONS, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.

Headquarters and Eastern Region Office: 257 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

Central Region: 79 EAST ADAMS STREET, CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS

Western Region: 3330 WEST ADAMS BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES 18, CALIFORNIA